

NSS, State Dept. reviews
completed

MORI C05099677

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

4/17/72
Sen. Hing: JBE called
Al -
HAK called me
this on 4/17/72
you apparently
is to him. I deleted
it for your reference
to see whether
still felt it
be pursued. The gauge
is trying to
keep.

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~

ACTION

April 11, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL HAIG

FROM: RICHARD T. KENNEDY
JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE

SUBJECT: Ladd-Gram on Possible FANK Assistance to
ARVN

Fred Ladd has sent you a cable (Tab C) outlining a plan for possible FANK actions against the rear of NVA units operating against the ARVN in MR's III and IV. He proposes that the President send Lon Nol a message urging such assistance.

We believe that FANK actions of even a limited nature would be valuable, both in terms of possibly easing NVA pressures against the ARVN somewhat, and in symbolizing Cambodian willingness to come to the aid of an ally which has many times aided them. However, we do not believe that the President should initiate this himself, but rather that the request should come from the South Vietnamese since ground operations in the current situation are primarily their responsibility.

Accordingly, we have drafted a back-channel message from Mr. Kissinger to Ambassador Bunker (Tab A) suggesting that he discuss means of stimulating such a request from the South Vietnamese with Generals Abrams and Weyand. Preferably Thieu would ask Lon Nol to take steps; then we could back up that request with a letter from the President to Lon Nol. Abrams and Weyand could then coordinate actions with the FANK and the ARVN. At Tab B is a back-channel message to Ladd informing him that we are taking this course.

Recommendation:

That you approve the messages at Tabs A and B.

Approve

HK

Disapprove

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

Amembassy SAIGON

25X1

EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR BUNKER FROM HENRY A. KISSINGER

It occurs to us that Cambodia might be able to render some military help to South Vietnam in current military situation by bringing pressure to bear on rear of NVA forces operating against ARVN units in MR-III and possibly MR-IV. Even FANK efforts of a limited nature might have symbolic value in showing that Cambodians are willing to come to the aid of an ally which many times in the past has aided them.

If you think that this idea has merit, suggest that you discuss means of stimulating South Vietnamese to ask for such assistance with Generals Abrams and Weyand. We believe that such a request should properly come from them rather than from us, since ground combat is primarily an ARVN show, and our role is one of providing support. Once request is made we could back it up with Lon Nol. Ambrams and Weyand then could discuss jointly with South Vietnamese and Cambodians how FANK operations could be coordinated with ARVN as well as degree and nature of U. S. support.

Warm regards,

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

Amembassy PHNOM PENH

25X1

REF: PHNOM PENH'S 1659

EYES ONLY FOR FRED LADD FROM GENERAL HAIG

We think that the concept of FANK aid for ARVN outlined in reftel has considerable merit. However, we believe it would be more desirable for request for such assistance to come from the South Vietnamese, since coping with NVA ground attacks is primarily their show. We are taking steps to stimulate request, which we would back up with letter from President to Lon Nol. Then General Abrams and General Weyand could discuss coordination of FANK/ARVN efforts with U.S. support.

Warm regards.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

"T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY
TO : MAJ. GEN. HAIG, THE WHITE HOUSE
FROM : MR. LADD, PHNOM PENH 1659

1. AT THE TRIPARTITE DEPUTIES MEETING IN SAIGON ON 7 APRIL I SUGGESTED IN THE RESTRICTED SESSION THAT THE KHMER INITIATE OPERATIONS TARGETED AGAINST THE BASE AREA OF THE 1ST NVA DIVISION AS A FIRST PRIORITY AND A SECONDARY EFFORT AGAINST THE BASE AREAS TO THE SOUTH EAST OF KOMPONG CHAM. THE SUGGESTION WAS WELL RECEIVED BY GENERAL WEYAND AND GENERAL MANH. THE KHMER DELEGATION (GENERALS FAN MUONG, FERNANDEZ AND POK SAM AN) INDICATED THEY WOULD LOOK INTO IT RIGHT AWAY.

2. THIS MORNING AT 0830 GENERAL SAK SUTSAKHAN BRIEFED ME ON A TWO-PHASE PLAN THAT WILL BE INITIATED IMMEDIATELY. DURING THE COMING WEEK THE KHMER WILL CONDUCT PHASE ONE OF AN OPERATION AGAINST THE REINFORCED KHMER COMMUNIST UNITS KNOWN TO BE FUNCTIONING AS HOLDING FORCES AGAINST FANK IN THE AREA AROUND THE CAPITAL, ALONG ROUTE 4, AND IN THE AREA OF KOMPONG CHAM ALONG ROUTE 7. PHASE TWO OF THE PLAN IS DIRECTED AGAINST, OR FEINTS AGAINST THE BASE AREA OF THE 1ST NVA DIVISION SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST OF KOMPONG SPEU, AND

PAGE 2 PHNOM PENH 1659 T O P S E C R E T
THAT OF THE ENEMY 5TH, 7TH AND 9TH DIVISIONS IN THE GENERAL
VICINITY OF CHUP.

3. THE KHMER UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF DOING
SOMETHING ON A PRIORITY BASIS TO SHOW THEIR POSITIVE DESIRE
TO HELP THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE IN THIS TIME OF HEAVY ENEMY
PRESSURE ON THEM. THEY BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT TO BE AT
ALL EFFECTIVE IN SUCH AN EFFORT, FANK MUST USE THIS COMING
WEEK IN PHASE ONE OF THEIR PLAN TO LOOSEN UP THEIR LINES
OF COMMUNICATION AND REDUCE THE EXISTING THREAT TO THE
SECURITY OF THE PHNOM PENH AREA POSED BY KC ELEMENTS. AT
THE MOMENT FANK ELEMENTS ARE ENGAGED WITH ONE OF THE BETTER
KC UNITS ABOUT 25 KILOMETERS NORTHWEST OF PHNOM PENH. THEY
ALSO WANT TO GET THEIR LOGISTIC PREPARATIONS FOR PHASE TWO
IN AS GOOD A CONDITION AS POSSIBLE AND WILL WORK CLOSELY
WITH CLELAND'S MEDTC DURING THIS COMING WEEK.

4. I ALSO DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH PRIME MINISTER
SON NGOC THANH ON 8 APRIL AND HE FULLY SUPPORTS THE CONCEPT
OF PROVIDING SOME POSITIVE SUPPORT TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE.
ALTHOUGH HE IS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN MILITARY AFFAIRS,
I AM SURE HE HAS EXERTED HIS INFLUENCE INTO THE FANK

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PLANNING OF THE PAST TWO DAYS. IN ALL RESPECTS, I HAVE
BEEN PLEASANTLY ENCOURAGED BY SON NGOC THANH'S PERFORMANCE
IN HIS NEW OFFICIAL ROLE.

5. I AM CONVINCED YOU CAN BE OF ASSISTANCE IN THIS
MATTER AND SUGGEST A MESSAGE (TWX) FROM THE PRESIDENT TO
LON NOL THAT BRINGS OUT THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. RECOGNITION OF KHMER ACHIEVEMENTS AND
ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS SUCH AS SECURITY OF POPULATION CENTERS
AND PRINCIPAL LOC'S, DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY OF THE KOMPONG
SOM PORT AREA, ESTABLISHING AN INCOUNTRY TRAINING CAPABILITY,
BUILDING A VIABLE LOGISTICAL SYSTEM, PROMULGATING A NEW
CONSTITUTION, ETC.

B. REFERENCE TO THE MAGNITUDE AND REGIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE
CURRENT COUNTRYWIDE ENEMY ATTACK AGAINST THE SOUTH
VIETNAMESE.

C. REFERENCE TO THE MANY SOUTH VIETNAMESE
ACTIONS TO ASSIST THE KHMER DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS SUCH
AS NUMEROUS INDEPENDENT AND COMBINED GROUND OPERATIONS,
TACTICAL AND LOGISTICAL AIR SUPPORT, PROVISION OF HELICOPTERS
FOR EMERGENCY FANK TROOP LIFTS, NAVAL OPERATIONS TO ESTABLISH

PAGE 4 PHNOM PENH 1659 T O P S E C R E T
AND MAINTAIN THE MEKONG RIVER CONVOY SYSTEM, TRAINING OF
THOUSANDS OF KHMER TROOPS IN SOUTH VIETNAM, ETC.

D. POINTING OUT THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY OF
CLOSE MILITARY AND POLITICAL REGIONAL COOPERATION AT THIS
PERHAPS DECISIVE PERIOD OF THE WAR.

E. ENCOURAGING THAT WITHIN THEIR CAPABILITY,
THE KHMER TAKE SOME POSITIVE ACTION TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR
DETERMINATION TO ASSIST THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AT THIS CRITICAL
TIME WHEN ALL MAJOR ENEMY FORCES ARE ORIENTED ON SOUTH
VIETNAM.

F. RECOGNIZING THAT UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES,
WHATEVER ACTION THE KHMER MAY TAKE WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY
PLANNED AND EXECUTED AS PRIORITIES FOR U.S./SVN TACTICAL AIR
SUPPORT AND RESUPPLY ARE BEING DIRECTED TO SUPPORT THE SOUTH
VIETNAMESE IN THEIR STRUGGLE AGAINST THIS MAJOR ENEMY THREAT
TO THEIR COUNTRY.

6. THIS HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN HASTE TO GET AN ANSWER
BACK TO YOU TODAY. I WILL PROVIDE MORE DETAILS LATER.
WHATEVER THE KHMER MAY DO, IT WON'T BE VERY MUCH. THEY
SIMPLY DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO DO ANYTHING DRAMATIC AND

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AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAIN THEIR OWN SECURITY. THEY CAN MAKE GESTURES, HOWEVER, AND A PUSH FROM THE PRESIDENT MIGHT INFLUENCE LON NOL TO ACT.

7. MY OWN ANALYSIS IS THAT THEY ARE MUCH BETTER PREPARED TO MAKE A THRUST IN THE AREA OF THE 1ST NVA BASE AREA SOUTHWEST OF KOMPONG SPEU THAN THEY ARE TO MESS AROUND THE REAR OF THE 5TH, 7TH AND 9TH DIVISIONS. ACTIVITY IN THE AREA SOUTH OF KOMPONG SPEU KEEPS THEIR SUPPLY LINES MANAGEABLE WHILE OPERATIONS SOUTHEAST OF KOMPONG CHAM PUT THEM ON THE END OF A LONG AND VERY DANGEROUS LOC -- FARTHER AWAY THAN THE CHENLA II AREA. THEY CAN SEE, AND I UNDERSTAND, THAT IF THEY GET IN A BIND OUT BEYOND KOMPONG CHAM, IT IS DOUBTFUL ANYONE EVEN THEIR OWN LIMITED RESERVES, WILL BE ABLE TO COME TO THEIR ASSISTANCE.

8. I HAVE DONE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO ALL I CAN TO ENCOURAGE THE ACTION YOU SUGGEST AND I AM SURE THE KHMER WILL TRY TO MAKE THE GRADE. WE CANNOT EXPECT MIRACLES, HOWEVER, AS THE KHMER ARE NEITHER STRONG ENOUGH OR FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO RESPOND ACCORDING TO RVNAF STANDARDS. WE WILL ALL DO OUR BEST.

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9. I AM FULLY AWARE OF ALL THE U.S. IS DOING TO SUPPORT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND I TRY TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH MACV ON HOW MATTERS ARE PROGRESSING IN SOUTH VIETNAM. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, NEITHER WE NOR THE KHMIR GET MUCH OUT OF THE SAIGON CROWD THAT WE DON'T HAVE TO DIG FOR DESPERATELY. A ONCE-A-MONTH TRIPARTITE EXCHANGE DOESN'T HACK IT IN EMERGENCY SITUATION. PERHAPS WHEN THIS FLAP IS OVER, A MORE RESPONSIVE ARRANGEMENT CAN BE HAMMERED OUT. GP-1
T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY